2:Oberg E-5 (1946-1947)1949 SK7 Guana SK7
Terena
[Chaco Period]

THE TERENA

(Pls. 1-11)

TERENA ECONOMY IN THE CHACO

HABITAT

Although it is no longer possible to determine by direct investigation the exact nature of the economy of the Terena upon their entry into the Chaco, indirect evidence points to agriculture as being the basis of subsistence. The Terena are an Arawak-speaking people and the Arawak-speaking tribes in the Amazon Basin are predominantly agriculturists. Terena myths tell of how *Yúrikoyuvakái* taught the people to practice agriculture:

> The Indians were hungry but they had no tools and did not know how to obtain food. The twins then gave the Indians all their tools. To the men, *Yúrikoyuvakái* gave the ax, *powóti;* the digging stick, *ñomeʼi;* the knife, *piritou;* the sickle, *yopilocóti;* the war club, *paliʼoi;* the bow, *shekié;* arrows, *shumé;* and the spear, *suiké.* To the women, the twins gave the spindle, *hopée. Yúrikoyuvakái* then taught the Indians how to hunt, fish, and grow crops.

We know, too, from old records, that the Arawak-speaking neighbors of the Terena were agriculturists. Thus, although no direct written or verbal evidance exists concerning the original nature of Terena economy it appears reasonably safe to assume that they were agriculturists in pre-Columbian days.

The Terena now describe their economic life in the Chaco as having been based on agriculture, hunting, fishing, collecting, and raiding. This shift away from an emphasis on agriculture is understandable. The Chaco with comparatively greater sources of wild food plants, fish, and game than existed in the tropical forest, offered not only the resources but a stimulus for their use. In addition, the practice of agriculture in the Chaco was not the same as in the rain forest. The long drought period in the Chaco demanded a storable surplus not necessary in a region where annual rainfall is more evenly distributed. Above all, the Terena came into contact with Chaco tribes that depended principally upon hunting, fishing, and collecting, and a mutual exchange of economic customs seems to have taken place. When the Terena took over the horse and the practice of hunting and raiding their neighbors on horseback, dependence

[P. 6-A]

THE TERENA

on agriculture became even less important. Conditions of the physical environment and cultural contacts, therefore, help to explain the economic readjustments which the Terena appear to have made in the Chaco. 174 241 [177]

Geographically the region formerly occupied by the Terena belongs to the great depressed plain of the upper Paraguay River known as the Chaco. The northeastern part of this plain is characterized by vast swamps relieved here and there by low crystalline hills. This part of the Chaco, too, has greater precipitation than the semiarid central Chaco. The Terena speak of their Chaco home as being wet and refer to dangers from floods. Although the annual rainfall here is estimated at 50 inches, it must be remembered that the rains fall from October to May, the remaining months being extremely dry. In the summer months, temperatures may reach over 100° F. During the winter months of July and August cold winds blow from the south, often bringing below-freezing temperatures. 133 132

This part of the Chaco is classified as savanna, swampy near the Paraguay River but merging into scrub forest to the west, with denser "galeria" forests lining the more permanent water courses. In the past, this region was particularly rich in plant and animal life which could be readily converted to human use. Among the wild plants which were of subsistence value to man were such trees and shrubs as the algarroba (*Prosopis*), the acacia, the Barbary fig, the chañar (*Courlisa decorticans*), mistol, the wild orange, and a wide variety of palms. Wild rice grew in the swamps. Locusts and the larvae and honey of bees were used. The scrub forests and swamps were the home of such animals as the deer, peccary, tapir, capybara, and the jaguar. Land and water birds were plentiful, and the rivers were stocked with many varieties of fish as well as turtles and shellfish. 133 [137] [136]

Discussing the resources of the Chaná (Guaná), Sánches Labrador says: 824

> The "Palo Santo" is the most widespread tree. They employ the hardwood of this tree to make spades to use in their fields, and pipes to smoke tobacco, which they appreciate very much. Birds are more abundant on the west bank of the river than on the east bank. The birds feed in the fields of the Chaná. They hunt many birds 136 [223]

[Text continues on P.8-A]

2:Oberg E-5 (1946-1947)1949 SK7 Guana SK7
Terena

THE VILLAGE OF BANANAL

The village of Bananal (P. I. Taunay) is situated about 4 km. north of the railroad station of Taunay. Bananal and the surrounding Indian lands are located on a low plateau which rises gently from the valley of the Aquidauana River. The soils of the plateau, laterites and tropical red soils, are derived from a crystalline base. The native vegetation belonging to the savanna belt of Central Brazil consists of scrub forest and grass, with heavier forest in the permanent water courses. The plateau is cut by numerous streams which are practically dry in the dry season but swell into relatively large streams during the rains extending from October to April. Erosion is superficial, as the vegetative cover has not been disturbed by overgrazing or extensive plowing.

The village is laid out in rectangular blocks separated by broad streets lined with mango trees. The central avenue forms part of the road which runs from Taunay to the Terena village of Ipegue, some 3 km. northeast of Bananal. Surrounding Bananal and Ipegue are large fazendas, many of which are connected by minor roads or paths.

The water supply for the inhabitants of the village is furnished by 12 wells, ranging in depth from 40 to 50 feet, 6 of which were constructed by the Government. At least two of the Government wells are furnished with pumps, one being operated by a windmill. Water for the stock, washing clothes, and taking baths is furnished by two dams on the outskirts of the village. Firewood for cooking is cut in the scrub forest outside the village. Areas not fenced in for farming are used as common pasture.

The official center of Bananal is the Post, consisting of such buildings as the residence of the manager, the school, the hospital, and the official visitors' building. These buildings are all made of red brick with tile roofs and unglazed tile floors. They are fenced in and surrounded by orange, lemon, and mango trees. None of the buildings have more than one story. In addition to these Government buildings, there is the Protestant mission school and the Catholic church. The rest of the buildings belong to the Indians. From a total of 86 buildings in the village, 75 are occupied.

Terena houses vary, not so much in size and shape, as in the material from which they are con-

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 22-A--Analyst]

3:Oliveira--77 E-5,4 (1955-1958) 1960 SK7 Guana SK7
Terena
Historical Brazil SL2

/59 cont./
conditions favorable to settling with the idea of setting up "latifundia."(102) It seems that /60/ the most convenient

102. Here is the testimony of João Henrique Elliot, who passed through the region in 1844: "All the land from here (Miranda fort) to the Maracaju range, over a distance of 24 leagues, is a continuous plain of clear campo, with a few thickets of brush; there is an enormous quantity of deer and rhea birds, but for the present there are few dwellers." (1848:168.)

technique consisted in the setting up of more or less improvised retiros /isolated ranchos/ in an attempt to cope with the mobility and unpredictability of a herd ever in search of new and better pastures.

It was with the arrival of a second human wave that the Guaná region, especially the area between the Miranda and Aquidauana rivers, came to hold a considerably augmented population. As shown by Werneck Sodré,(103) it was with the

103. "The war ended, and ended on the western borders, in the theater of Cerro-Corá, with the last episode on the banks of the Aquidabã, the province had in its territory appreciable companies of soldiers regimented for its defense, who had

3:Oliveira--163b E-5,4(1955-1958) 1960 SK7 Guana SK7
Kinikinau

/112b/

137
142
291
302

Kinikináu survivor of the "Paraiso" local group, now living in Cachoeirinha. (1958)